Central Heating Troubleshooting Advice

Troubleshooting checklist

There could be a number of reasons why your central heating or hot water system is not working. You may be able to fix several problems yourself, which in turn avoids an engineer visit from Aaron Services Ltd.

Please try these tips first:

- **Check that the gas/oil, electrical and water supplies to the heating appliance are turned on.** It's surprising how easily they can get accidentally switched off.

- **If relevant, check that you have sufficient credit in your gas and electric card meters.**

- Check that the **room thermostat is turned up and the clock timer/programmer is switched on.**

- **Got a system with a permanent pilot light? Check that it hasn't gone out -** this is a very common problem with older gas appliances.

- **Try putting your heating on maximum for a short while** to see if you can get it back into action.

- **Have the clocks gone forward or back?** Your clock programmer might just need adjusting to the correct time.

- **Has there been a power cut recently?** Your heating clock programmer may have returned to its factory settings when the power came back on. Test the central heating by setting it to come on in 15 minutes time - if that works, simply re-enter your preferred settings.

- **Do you have a customer-operated reset switch (not one that needs you to remove any casing)?** These are usually found on the front of modern boilers. Please check your appliance user manual to see if it needs resetting.

- **Try turning the electrical supply to the boiler off and on** - the switch is usually near the boiler or in the airing cupboard. This might reset your boiler and resolve the problem.

- **Could you have frozen pipes?** In periods of long, cold weather, the condensate pipe of your boiler can freeze. **Please see "My pipes have frozen" below…**

- **Are other gas appliances affected?** If so the problem is bigger, you will need to contact your landlord, so that we can then make a mutually convenient appointment for an engineer to attend.

- Some heating systems with a hot water cylinder may also have an immersion heater fitted as a back up to the heating appliance. In the event of a boiler failure, you can switch on the immersion heater via the spur switch / timer that is usually located within the same airing cupboard space. Please remember to switch back off once the heating appliance is operational again.

For open vented system boilers
(You have this type of boiler if it has a small black tank. You'll usually find these in the loft.)

Has the ball valve float in the feed and expansion cistern got stuck?
(this is usually a small plastic cistern situated in the loft)

If so, when your water system falls to a certain point, system water can't circulate. If you can safely and easily get into and move around your loft, check to see if the ball valve is

stuck (usually indicated by no or low water in the cistern). Gently move the ball float valve arm to free it - do not use force. This may solve the problem.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF ENTERING A LOFT SPACE AND THAT DOING SO IS ENTIRELY AT YOUR OWN RISK.

For sealed system boilers or combination boilers
(You have this type of boiler if it doesn't have a cistern that looks like a smaller version of your cold water cistern.)

- **Has the system pressure dropped?** This is sometimes caused by water leaks, and can stop the boiler from working properly:

  1. check the pressure gauge - this should be set at approx 1 bar. A red indicator needle sometimes shows the position set when the boiler was installed.

  2. look in your appliance user manual to see if you can re-pressurise the boiler yourself - you can also find instructions on the rear of the control panel. **If your boiler panel needs tools to remove it, do NOT touch it: make an appointment for an Aaron engineer to call instead!**

My pipes have frozen

To try unfreezing the boiler condensate pipe yourself, follow these steps - you may need to repeat them several times:

1. hold a **hot water bottle or heat wrap** around the pipe
2. **pour hot, not boiling,** water over the frozen end of the pipe with a watering can, jug or kettle

BE AWARE THAT IF THERE IS A VERY HARD FREEZE STILL HAPPENING, THIS MAY PRESENT AN INCREASED SLIPPING HAZARD ON EXTERNAL PATHS WHICH THE CUSTOMER DOES AT THEIR OWN RISK.

When you think the pipe may be unfrozen, try switching on the boiler again. You may need to reset the boiler to do this. If the boiler fires it up, it's fixed. If not, you could try to unfreeze the pipes again.

Still got a problem? Arrange an appointment for an Aaron engineer to call.

Our engineer can unfreeze the pipe and advise you on ways to prevent this in the future.

What could be the cause?

In long periods of cold weather, the condensate pipe of your boiler - a waste pipe that carries condensation from the boiler to your drain outside - can freeze, especially if it's exposed or incorrectly installed.

This can leave you without heat and hot water as the boiler has an in-built safety device to prevent any damage to the system.